



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

seen in the case of the genitive of comparison, and the partitive genitive. With respect to the latter, Villehardouin enjoyed considerably more freedom than either the Latin or the Modern French. The use of the partitive genitive by means of an ellipsis, which is so very common in the modern language, is almost unknown to him. The greatest liberty prevails regarding the syntactical position of the genitive.

It seems doubtful whether the Modern French has received anything in exchange for the lost liberty of the language of Villehardouin's time.

Mr. Adolphe Cohn, of Harvard College, spoke on some interesting points of genitive usage, suggested by this paper.

He sketched the history of this construction from the earliest literary monuments of the French, the *Serments de Strasbourg* and *Cantilene de Sainte Eulalie*, down through later Old French and the Middle French documents, to the present time, where he cited several examples in which the original word-arrangement has been preserved. He characterized, for these different epochs, the varying forms of expression which resulted according to the thought represented, and sought to mark the influence of thought and euphony upon the growth and establishment of the genitive relation in the modern languages.

The second session, set apart for discussion, principally, of Educational subjects, convened at 8.20 p. m.

At the opening of the meeting, the President, on motion of Prof. C. E. Fay, of Tufts College, appointed a committee of five, consisting of Professors Elliott, Fay, Boyesen, Williams and Brandt, to consider the question of continuing the temporary Association, formed last year, as a permanent organization, and, if this scheme should be regarded favorably, to report at a future meeting on articles of a Constitution for the Society.

4. The Convention then listened to a paper by Prof. William Cook, formerly of Harvard College, on "The Selection, which every Teacher of a Modern Language should make, of Subjects to teach."

Of course, the writer said, he cannot teach everything about German unless he himself knows everything, and unless he has unlimited time at his disposal. A German knows:—

1. How to speak German.
2. He understands it when he hears it spoken or read aloud.
3. He writes it.
4. He understands it when written or printed.
Some Germans know, besides, more or less about :—
5. The Literature,
6. The History,
7. The Etymology,
8. The Grammar,
9. The Phonetics, of their language.

Of these numbers, five to nine are, of course, important, each in a different degree, as means towards one to four, but it cannot be supposed that any conscientious teacher,—intent upon making the best use of his pupil's limited time, and not upon teaching what is pleasantest and what will add most to his own reputation,—will maintain that as ends, and not as means, five to nine stand on the same level of importance as one to four. Of the numbers one to four, four is generally admitted to be the most valuable, the most easily acquired in large college classes, and the one a person is least likely to forget for want of after-use. Next in value comes two, as easy to teach in large classes, and even more valuable than one, if the student—most students of course are not—is ever thrown among Germans who do not understand English. Two is also the most essential of preparations for speaking German fluently; for one learns fluency from hearing and understanding others speak. One will almost never have occasion to practice number three, unless he goes to Germany,—for the safe rule is to write one's own language and let one's correspondent write his,—the opposite course will give rise to the most annoying misunderstandings. On the other hand, every one who intends afterwards to teach German, should write German, and write a great deal of it. Only in this way will he avoid absorbing his knowledge of German unreasoningly, and being confounded by the requests for reasons in grammar or the use of words, which his future pupils are sure to address to him.

The propositions in this paper sound like truisms, but there is pressing need of formulating them just now, when methods are so often discussed before it is clearly made out just what is to be taught, and specialists in modern languages are magnifying their office, in order to secure fitting recognition from specialists in ancient languages, and to secure, each for himself individually, the confidence of a public which mistakes moderate claims for incompetence.

All discussion of methods is reserved for another occasion.

President Carter followed, opening the debate on the subject selected for the evening:—

“Would it be desirable to allow the substitution of one Modern in place of one Ancient Language for admission to College?”

He opposed the idea of discarding Greek, as a requirement for entrance to college, because he did not think anything could replace it in disciplinary value. Other linguistic studies might have a practical, every-day worth superior to that of the classics, but the usefulness of the latter as essential factors for mental discipline could not be over-estimated. Without them, the mind could never attain that acuteness, that keen preception of beauty in form which characterizes long association with the classical literary world. To the Greek, especially, the speaker thought, do we have to look for the principal means of developing that rich idealism, in which our American civilization is so sadly wanting.

Prof. C. E. Fay, of Tufts College, replied that we have to face a practical problem in our education; that while he would concede to the Greek a certain disciplinary value, there are other studies knocking at the doors of our colleges and demanding entrance: the schedule is already full; something has to give place to the new-comers. He would advocate the adjusting of college curriculums to the practical needs of our present life, and, consequently, would give to modern language study precedence over that of Greek and over the traditional, historical sentimentalism for the Classics, in general.

Prof. Boyesen spoke in favor of substituting modern language requirements for those in Greek. Even as a disciplinary study, as an intellectual stimulus, a modern language properly taught can give, in his opinion, much better results than Greek, and, if the same time were given to it, and teachers with the same training as in the classical tongues should handle it, the effect would be much more advantageous to the student.

Prof. O. B. Super, of Dickinson College, spoke in favor of making Greek an Elective, but that Latin should be retained as an absolutely necessary basis for all grammar study.

Prof. A. H. Palmer, of Adelbert College, also advocated substitution of the modern idioms for Greek, instancing gratifying results of the same in the Institution with which he is connected.

Prof. Boyesen here moved the following resolution, which was seconded by Prof. H. S. White, of Cornell University :

Resolved, "That it is the sense of this Convention that a reading knowledge of French and German be accepted, as an equivalent for Greek, as a requirement for admission to American Colleges."

This proposition called forth much lively discussion.

Prof. Cohn, of Harvard College, said he thought that, if such a thing be recommended, the mere reading knowledge of French and German is not sufficient, as a substitute for Greek. He suggested that some classical authors, at least, be specified.

Prof. Boyesen replied that the resolution was made general, and did not preclude any college from specifying any author, or authors, it might see fit to do. The point of selection and quantity of modern language, must be left to individual Institutions.

Prof. C. E. Fay, of Tufts College, stated that Harvard College had already called a convention of teachers of preparatory schools, in order to ascertain what they would take in Modern Language study, as an equivalent for the amount of Greek now demanded for entrance to college.

Prof. H. C. G. Brandt, of Hamilton College, said he was in favor of the resolution, provided the degree of Bachelor of Letters only were conferred for such a course, but not so, if the B. A. degree was intended.

Prof. A. Williams, of Brown University, opposed the resolution; saying, he could not properly teach many things in the Modern Languages unless his students knew something of Greek. He cited, especially, cases from the German classics, such as Goethe's *Iphigenia*, etc.

Prof. F. A. March, of Lafayette College, was in favor of the resolution with certain minor restrictions.

The following substitute for Prof. Boyesen's resolution was offered by Prof. Fay :—

Resolved, "That it is the sense of this convention that it is expedient to accept an equivalent course in either German or French, as an alternative for the Greek required for admission to College."

This motion was not seconded, and, after a long discussion of the original proposition, during which much valuable information was brought out touching the requirements for entrance to college

in various parts of the country, and touching the facilities for procuring preparatory instruction in the modern languages, the original resolution was laid on the table and the Convention adjourned, to meet again at 10 a. m., the next day.

The third session was called to order by the President, at 10.15 a. m., on the 30th. The report of the Committee on organization was called for and Prof. A. Williams, of Brown University, read the following rules, which were recommended by the Committee as a Constitution for the Association:—

I.

The name of this Society shall be "THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA."

II.

Any person approved by the Executive Council may become a member by the payment of three dollars, and may continue a member by the payment of the same amount each year.

III.

The object of this Association shall be the advancement of the study of the Modern Languages and their Literatures.

IV.

The officers of the Association shall be a President, Secretary, Treasurer, and nine members, who shall together constitute the Executive Council, and these shall be elected annually by the Association.

V.

The Executive Council shall have charge of the general interests of the Association, such as, the election of members, calling of meetings, selection of papers to be read, and the determination of what papers shall be published.

VI.

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote at any annual meeting, provided the proposed amendment has received the approval of the Executive Council.

Prof. W. T. Hewett, of Cornell University, moved that the report be accepted and the articles be discussed in detail. This motion was carried, and after some little explanation and discussion, the articles were adopted, each severally, and the Committee was continued, to suggest at a future sitting names of members for an Executive Council of the Association. The Conference then proceeded to the regular business of the session, the reading of papers, after having adopted the five-minute rule for discussion. Dr. J. W. Bright, of the Johns Hopkins University, read a communication,

5. "On Some Aspects of the Modern Language Question."

The aim of this paper was to present a few jottings upon this question, which might suggest the importance of having more regard to certain of its phases than would seem to be the fashion.

It is unfair to the classical studies to measure their educational value by the beggarly results of this course produced by the great majority of American Colleges. The average of classical scholarship among us has fallen too low to furnish a just basis of reference: this factor of deterioration must not be neglected in the problem.

So, too, the significance of Modern Language study calls for just definition. In the ardor of enthusiasm its advocates will do well to give themselves somewhat to balanced reflection; the details of the question have been left too vague; subsidiary considerations have been exalted into essentials, and the cause has been weakened by the failure to discriminate between concessions made to this department of study in behalf of the natural sciences, and such as contribute to the substantial advancement of the department itself.

The process of attaining the ends for which this Association has been formed, will necessarily be a slow one. Strong prejudices and dear delusions are involved in the changes proposed; the teaching profession no less than the public must be schooled into an understanding of what is intended.

There must be no wholesale importation of foreign methods; all changes must be organic, in keeping with the spirit and needs of our own American Society.

Men of the highest educational authority are yet to be brought to a just recognition of this department of study.

The notorious indifference of English-speaking people to sound scholarship in the Modern Languages is difficult of explanation. One of the causes underlying this state of things, the writer believes to be the English proclivity and felicity in popularizing the facts of science. In the case of English philology we have been in the paradoxical position of popularizing a science before possessing the science itself.